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Title: Need to give financial sanction for the construction on Shirdi Ghat Section on NH-48 in Karnataka.

SHRI D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA (UDUPI-CHIKMAGALUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. It is a very important matter. Since last two years, the coastal people of Karnataka could not come to Bangalore *via* road. National Highway No. 48 is the only road connectivity for the coastal districts of Karnataka with the State Capital of Bangalore of the State. But it is quite unfortunate that in the last two years, no vehicle could ply through the National Highway to reach Bangalore as one stretch running in the ghat section is in such a bad condition which is not at all motorable.

The Shiradi ghat section in Karnataka State lies on National Highway No. 48 between kilometers 210 to 270 and the stretch from Sakleshpura to Gundya from 237 to 263 is exposed to extraordinary conditions like topography of steep gradient, thick forest, multiple curves, adverse working conditions, scarcity of material, labour with an average rainfall of 6,000 to 7,000 mm per year. The traffic intensity on this stretch is more than 23,000 PCU. At present the stretch is provided with flexible pavement.

Accordingly, estimate amounting to Rs. 118.58 crore has been submitted by the State PWD to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways in September, 2009. For estimates costing more than Rs. 100 crore, clearance of the Economic Finance Committee (EFC) of the Ministry is necessary. The Ministry had sought clarification as per the observation noted by the Member of the Planning Commission in the minutes of the EFC conducted on 7th September, 2010. The para wise compliance has been submitted to the Ministry during 2010. The fresh EFC meeting is yet to be convened by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Several representations have also been made by the State Government for early approval to the estimate. However, the repair and maintenance works of this Shirdi Ghat stretch has been started under Flood Damage Repair (FDR) grants of 2010-11. The reach will be made traffic worthy, but it will survive only during the rainy reason.

So, I would like to urge upon the Union Minister for Road Transport to take immediate necessary action to sanction the estimated cost of Rs. 118.58 crore which is pending since last two years for the work of improvement of Shiradi Ghat stretch from Sakleshpura to Gundya so as to complete the work before the rainy season.